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Housetraining Your Puppy

Here are some easy steps to get your puppy housetrained. By keeping a close eye on him, recognizing his signals, understanding his instincts and rewarding his appropriate behavior, you can easily teach your dog to eliminate in an appropriate place

- Until you can trust your dog or puppy, he should not be allowed to wander around the house unsupervised. It is appropriate to use a long leash to tether your dog so he can't roam too far away from you. Your dog should be kept in a small room or crate when he can't be supervised and taken outside when you return.
- Feed your dog a measured amount of food on a regular schedule. If food remains in the bowl after he walks away, give him about 10 minutes and then pick it up.
- Puppies will need to go to the bathroom after they eat, play, sleep, or have been confined. Take them out 5-30 minutes after these activities to a place where you would like for them to eliminate
- When your dog or puppy begins to sniff the ground or circles around, quickly and calmly take him to the desired elimination spot.
- Come up with a phrase that you will use such as "Go potty" or "Hurry up" that you want your dog to associate with going to the bathroom. Say it multiple times every time you take him out.
- When your pup begins to eliminate, give him quiet praise such as "Good boy" or "Good potty" in a calm manner.
- When your pup has finished, immediately give him enthusiastic praise, petting, and a food reward. If he doesn't go, then try again in 15-20 minutes.
- As your pup learns the routine, continue to give praise but decrease the frequency of the food rewards.
- Accidents should be prevented! Don't scold your puppy when it has an accident that wasn't prevented. It's up to you to set your puppy up for success. The area where your puppy had the accident should be cleaned and deodorized using an enzymatic cleaner such as Natures Miracle. Remember that young puppies may need to go out every 30-60 minutes.

Some dogs have trouble clearly communicating when they need to go out. Owners can get frustrated when they miss the subtle signs. One training technique is to teach your dog to ring a bell when they need to go out.

- Set a small bell near the door that you take your dog out. Ring it immediately before you open the door with your dog. Do this every time you take your pup out for potty breaks for several days in a row. Keep your pup focused on elimination or they may associate the bell with play time.

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2

- Next, suspend the bell right next to the door at the height of your dog's nose. When you take your dog out to eliminate gently touch his nose to the bell, making it ring. Do this for several days in a row.
- Your dog may start to associate the bell with going to the bathroom. If he doesn't, you can smear a little peanut butter or cheese on the bell before you take your dog out and allow your dog to lick the bell on the way outside. Praise your dog as you go outside.
- Once your dog begins to ring the bell on his own you need to take him outside every time so that he learns that ringing the bell will reliably allow him to eliminate outside.

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